

Action of the Examiner mailed October 17, 2002. Having addressed all objections and grounds of rejection, claims 1-22, being all the pending claims, are now deemed in condition for allowance. Entry of this amendment and the accompanying Declaration under 37 C.F.R. 1.131 and reconsideration to that end is respectfully requested.

The sole issue remaining is the Examiner's rejection of claims 1-4, 1-14, 16-18, and 20-22 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,621,892, issued to Cook (hereinafter referred to as "Cook") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,347,330 B1, issued to Dawson et al (hereinafter referred to as "Dawson").

The Declaration of Barbara A. Christensen under 37 C.F.R. 1.132 has been previously submitted to provide evidence of the completion of the invention before September 4, 1998, the effective date of Dawson as prior art. The Examiner has surprisingly not found this sufficient to remove Dawson as a reference. Therefore, enclosed herewith, please find the declaration of Niels Gebauer, sole inventor, under 37 C.F.R. 1.131, which further supports that the invention was completely conceived, completely reduced to practice, and on-sale before the effective date of Dawson.

Having thus responded to each objection and ground of rejection, Applicants respectfully request entry of this amendment and allowance of claims 1-22, as amended, being the only pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

January 17, 2003